THE DEMOCRAT.

Published Every Friday Morning.
TILLMAN & PRICE, Proprietors.

VERSAILLES, : MISSOURI.

The Trapper's Love Story

By FRANK H. SWEET

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"WHAT you say?" and Raoul looked up sharply from the trap he had been scraping and cleaning. But the visitor's face was only friendly and inquiring, without sarcasm or impertinence; and the momentary gleam in the trapper's eyes died out. He had grown to like this stranger, and had told him more things concerning his past life than he had ever divulged to any living man before. But the last question had cut deep.

For a long time he bent over the trap, his fingers trembling as he scraped the rust from the jaws and shank. All around were evidences of speedy departure, his gun standing in a corner, cleaned and polished until the barrel shone like a mirror, his blankets, provisions, all the rest of the traps, even his moccasins and snowshoes, packed and fastened into compact bundles for convenient carrying. In a wolf skin a few feet away the dog lay with his nose resting upon his outstretched paws, motionless, but with his eyes wide open, watching. He understood, and was ready and waiting. Twenty-four hours, and he and the trapper would start for their winter in the far north, where every day was in close companionship with life and death.

As he saw the shadow come to Raoul's face and slowly fade, the visitor stepped forward impulsively, placing his hand upon the trapper's shoulder.

"I beg your pardon, Raoul," he said. "I did not know. I was merely interested in your life, and spoke without thinking. You may tell me something else."

"Non, on, m'sieu; I been tell you 'bout dis. It is not dat I be ashame," and Raoul forced the last vestige of shadow from his face. But he was still grave. "It ain't ver' mooch to tell, m'sieu," he went on, "only jus' one little part my life, an' it happen long, long time ago, an' all in two, t'ree

"T'ANK YOU, M'SIEU," HE SAID.

week. But young peoples like hear 'bout dese t'ings, an' dis be so ver' long time ky," drawing a hard breath which he forced into a mirthless chuckle, "dat I ain' min' tellin' 'bout him. You been t'ink it funny I ain' like no girl, dat I ain' nev' be married, dat I ain' nev' make no home?"

"Yes, if you don't mind my saying so," the visitor answered. "You are a strong, handsome man, even though your hair is turning gray and you are scarred by encounters with wild animals and the elements, and you are straightforward and tender-hearted and a gentleman in all your instincts—just such a person as any thoughtful girl might love."

Raoul shook his head.

"T'ank you, m'sieu," he said, "but you ain' know all. Dat t'oughful girl been like man who stay in home an' fix up t'ings an' ain' nev' car' run roun'. I been like run roun' all de time. When I was boy I run off to be hunter, an' when I grow to be man I like more as anyt'ing to go 'way off in de weed 'among de big game. I be strong man, once, but long time ago, 'fore de hair turn. I be mooch stronger. Not'in' ain' scut me so well in dose day as to fin' de bigges' an' wil'es' game in all de place roun', an' den see which de stronges', him or me. Sometime I been t'row de gun down an' roll up de sleeve, jus' to make de wrestle more fair.

"But you ain' car' 'bout all des," his animation suddenly vanishing. "I been goin' tell 'about de girl. Her fader came to work 'long me on de reever, an' him an' me be ver' good frien's. Folks say I likely young man den," simply, "ver' strong an' ver' han'some. De fader like me an' say so, an' I t'ink de girl been like me some. An' I—" He stopped suddenly, raising his keen, deepset eyes to the visitor's face. "You ev' know a girl dat was an angel come down to show what Heaven been like?" he asked; "sweeter den anyt'ing you ev' dream of in de worl' before, closer in your heart den life an' more far off as de stars? You ev' know her?"

"Yes," the visitor answered, a tender, almost reverent look coming into his eyes, "I know her."

"You un'erstan' den," Raoul went on. "Life ain' not'in' 'cept it goin' make dat girl more happy an' better off. She not like any girl I ev' see 'fore, an' dere plenty han'some girl in Canada. She be more like some great lady dat ain' proud an' ain' know she been han'some—only Elise ain' edueat. She one queen drop drown in de wood by mistake an' grow up 'fore peoples fin' out. When I t'ink maybe she goin' come live long me till we both be dead, I ain' hardly know how I breathe, it be so won'erful.

"Den a young man come from Montreal to see 'bout some reever claim, an' he hire me to show him how de current run dis way an' dat way an' how far up de spring water rise, an' den one day we go pas' de cabin an' he see Elise.

"Well, he feel 'bout her jus' like me, an' ver' soon I see dat Elise feel to M'sieu de l'Irme an' me 'bout de same. When I been go see her she like me bes', 'cause I ain' nev' 'fraid not'in', an' go down de reever stan'in' straight up on a log like no udder man ev' dar to; but when M'sieu de l'Irme go see her, den she like him bes', 'cause he sof' spoke an' poleesh an' educat. I been see how it goin' be pret' queeck. We ain' both know her but two weeks, an' she like both de same; two, t'ree more weeks, an' she goin' like jus' one mooch better, an' it goin' 'pend on which de bes' man."

"And you proved yourself to be that, of course?"

"I been pret' steady nerve dose day," Raoul went on, without seeming to notice the interruption. "When I start out for t'ing I go straight on an' if it broke my head I let it been broke. I nev' stop to count dat. When I see how t'ings goin' I slip off in de wood wher' I be by myself. Dat my way. I ain' nev' t'ink good with peoples roun'. Well, firs' I see Elise married an' me lookin' out for her, an' I know how; den I see M'sieu de l'Irme lookin' out for her, an' I know he goin' do jus' de same. I been watch him pret' close, an' know he clean, straight man who goin' do jes' what he say.

"So dat ain' settle it, an' I go queeck to Montreal, my tooth set hard."

"To find out something about M'sieu de l'Irme?" the visitor said.

Raoul nodded. "Qui, m'sieu. Her fader an' bodder 'bout dat. But when a girl get married she goin' 'pend a might' long time on de man mos' likely. I been know 'bout myself, an' I t'ink I know 'bout M'sieu de l'Irme. But I ain' goin' let Elise take some reesk, non. When I fin' out if he been good man as me, den I goin' back an' say, 'Here, Elise, you plek out de one you been mos' happy long with.'"

A slight grin twitched the corners of Raoul's mouth.

"Seem like I might' fair," he continued, "but I feel jes' how t'ings comin' out all de time. Her fader like me, and Elise t'ink 'chole lot what her fader say, an' she like me, too, some—much as de udder man, I t'ink. I goin' stan' close up to him when she look, an' I ten inch taller an' fift' pound bigger, an' my voice goin' drown him all out. His voice sof' an' quiet like, 'cep' once in long time when his eyes flash, den it still sof' but cut like knife an' make de udder man jump. Qui, I know jus' how t'ings comin' out—till I go down to Montreal. Den I know jus' de same, only de worl' been shif' roun'."

He was silent so long this time that the visitor would have reminded him of the unfinished narrative, had it been upon any other subject. As it was, he waited.

"I been 'quire 'bout M'sieu de l'Irme," Raoul said at length, in a low voice, "an' fin' he straight, true man, jus' like I t'ink. But more, I fin' he great lawyer, with big house an' plent' servant an' t'ings like dat. Any folk who 'long to him goin' have de ver' bes' de worl' got to give. When I fin' dat out I go off in de wood an' fight de bigges' fight dat man ev' live t'ro. Den I go buy trap an' t'ing an' start off on de longes' an' mos' far off hunt I ev' take. I been gone t'ree year."

"What! And did not go back to Elise?"

"I ain' dar'. Maybe she start out to like me bes', an' you know what life been as trapper wife. Elise ain' meant for dat, non. She made for de bes'."

"And forgive me—haven't you ever seen her since?"

"Non, I ain' nev' feel strong 'nough to go to Montreal since dat time. But I hear she been 'sist on goin' to school an' study to be like him, an' dey have a great house, an' she be like queen 'mong de peoples. Dey have two child, and de oldes' I been hear de name Raoul! ! " The trapper rose impatiently and strode to the pack of traps, over which he bent, ostensibly trying to place the one he had just cleaned with the others. The visitor glanced toward him, then turned abruptly and stole softly from the cabin.

AMERICANS NOT ECONOMICAL.

Such Is the Opinion of a French Journalist Recently a Visitor in This Country.

"There is no country in the world where people are less economical and work harder than in the United States."

This is the proposition laid down by Jules Huret, the Paris journalist, who has been seeing Yankeeland through French eyes, reports the Chicago Inter Ocean.

"In France," he writes, "one sees all over the streets the sign, 'Repairing done here.' In the United States they do no repairs. When clothes, shoes or furniture have served their time they are thrown away. Machines ten years old are sold for old iron, houses are torn down to make room for more modern ones."

He notes the wide use of silk in America among all classes, and remarks the privileges granted by the United States to the silk manufacturers, their exemption from taxes for a certain number of years, etc.

France, he says, would do well to emulate this example and not permit herself to be distressed, even in her silks, by this marvelous young country.

A POETIC LANGUAGE.

Malagasses of Africa Have an Expressive and Appropriate Name for Everything.

The most poetical of savage languages is that of the Madagasses, or Malagasses, of Africa. They call everything by a name that expresses its appearance or its meaning perfectly. Thus a hill is a "mountain child" in the mouths of these people. Rivers are "water mothers." A much-used path the Malagasse calls a "ripe path."

The brain is the "head's innermost" and the pupil of the eye is the "eye king." The grinding teeth are the "teeth princesses," and the fingers are called "hand branches." If a man lives carelessly the Malagasses say that he "is eating his soul." "A jungle of boys" is the way the youngsters are described when they gather in numbers, and a very short space of time is denoted by the expression, "while one could roast a grasshopper."

A selfish man is said to be "embracing the crocodile," and a miser is said to be a "lover of the scorpion." If a person is vain the Malagasses say that he is "grass that is trying to grow bigger than a banana." The saucer is the "wife of the cup."

SHERIFF SAVED THE DAY.

In Order to Prevent Bloodshed He Was Compelled to Do Some Killing.

Opie Read, the novelist, was telling of his experience as a journalist in Kentucky some years ago, says the New York World.

"There was a good deal of news," he said, "such as shootings and knifings, but this news was not regarded as important and little attention was paid to it. I remember once when a local feud broke out afresh, when members of the opposing sides met at the county seat.

"There were hot words, a blow was struck, and weapons were drawn, when the sheriff interfered. He loudly announced that he would not tolerate any violence, ordered the parties to separate, and when his orders were not obeyed he began shooting.

"I forget whether he killed eight or nine, but I know that in describing the incident in my paper I commended the sheriff for his prompt action and bravery, and added the paragraph: 'There is no doubt but for the prompt action of the sheriff there would have been bloodshed.'"

INHERITANCE.

Be still; the trees are still.
Be strong; the trees are strong.
Be glad; the trees are glad.
Fear thou no wrong.
Lie in the springing grass;
Watch the fleet clouds that pass
Over the trees.
Feel thine old Mother Earth
Thrill with the blossoms' birth;
Is not the air a-thrill?
Doth not the Sun his will?
Thrill thou with these.

Thou hast the Violet's right
To thine inheritance,
Take of the Oak-tree's might;
All Earth is theirs and thine;
Smile in the good sunshine.
God needs thee, fearful heart;
Thou of His plan a part,
Sing, while the flowers dance,
Sing and be glad.

Let not the Crocus shame thee!
Let not the sparrows blame thee!
O in this air of God's,
Grief dare not claim thee!

Thou, too, hast praise to sing.
Thou, too, hast gold to give,
In His own love-light
Live, God commands thee live!
So shall thy soul grow strong;
Grief spread his vampire wing,
Scared by thy song.

—Daniske Dandridge, in N. Y. Independent.

The Need of Foresters

By PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT.

The forest resources of our country are already depleted. They can be renewed and maintained only by the cooperation of the forester with the practical man of business in all his types, but, above all, with the lumber man. And the most striking and encouraging fact in the forest situation is that lumber men are realizing that practical lumbering and practical forestry are allies, not enemies, and that the future of each depends upon the other. The resolutions passed at the last meeting of the representatives of the lumber interests in Washington were a striking proof of this fact and a most encouraging feature of the present situation. So long as we could not make the men concerned in the great lumber industry realize that the foresters were endeavoring to work in their interest and not against them, the headway that could be made was but small. We shall be able to work effectively and bring about important results of a permanent character largely in proportion as we are able to convince those men, the men at the head of that great business, of the practical wisdom of what the foresters of the United States are seeking to accomplish.

The United States is exhausting its forest supplies far more rapidly than they are being produced. The situation is grave, and there is only one remedy. That remedy is the introduction of practical forestry on a large scale, and of course that is impossible without trained men, men trained in the closet and also by actual field work under practical conditions.

I believe that the foresters of the United States will create a more effective system of forestry than we have yet seen.

Nowhere else is the development of a country more closely bound up with the creation and execution of a judicious forest policy. This is, of course, especially true of the west, but it is true of the east also. Fortunately in the west we have been able, relatively to the growth of the country, to begin at an early day, so that we have been able to establish great forest reserves in the Rocky mountains instead of having to wait and attempt to get congress to pay large sums for their creation, as we are now endeavoring to do in the southern Appalachians. Not only is a sound national forest policy coming rapidly into being, but the lumber men of the country are proving their interest in forestry by practicing it.

PAPER HEADGEAR.

New Kind of Hat Invented and Made in Germany Meets with Favor.

When the many uses of papier macae were made known to the world, a few years ago, we grew accustomed to the idea of things—even such substantialities as railroad ties and bedsteads—being manufactured from this apparently frail material. But it remained for the most likely and commendable paper article—the hat—to come in at the tag end of the procession.

The paper hat for men's wear has many things to recommend it to the public—first of all its cheapness, a big item in this bargain-hunting age, says the Philadelphia Ledger. Its cost is ridiculously low, as the munificent sum of ten cents will make you the owner of a hat which looks like a straw, is light as the proverbial feather and is rainproof as a duck's back. It will not crush, being saved from that common catastrophe to nattiness by a wide inside padding.

It is patented and made in Germany—that last magic phrase which sells anything in this country, which honors still its hall-marked imports more than its home products. So we may expect next summer a deluge of paper hats for the million, and so will the pendulum swing back to the other extreme from the purse-flattering Panama, which has been flattered by imitation so much last season.

"I'm glad to hear that," said a merchant, on being told of the threatened hat invasion. "My panama cost me about $700 all told last summer. For when I shut my eyes and plunged into the purchase of that hat I had to buy a new suit to go with it—it was like the tenement room that looked too dirty to match the flowers given by a charitably inclined woman—and so the whole house had to be made over to go with it. Then my wife kept throwing it up to me that my hat cost $50, and so—well, any married man knows how that hat drained my purse before I was through with it!"

Living, Yet Dead.

In a German law journal may be found a curious account of a woman, who, though actually living, is legally dead. Some years ago she disappeared from her home, and after three years had elapsed the court formally pronounced her dead and turned over her property to her next of kin. Soon afterward she returned to her native place, and as there was no question as to her identity, she naturally thought that she would have no difficulty in recovering her property. The court, however, flatly refused to comply with her request. "You have been declared dead," it virtually said, "and it is impossible for us to regard you as living." Thereupon the woman appealed to a higher court, but her labor was in vain, for the verdict of the lower court was upheld and, moreover, an official notice was issued to the effect that the plaintiff, having formally been declared dead, could not now be restored to life, as the law understands that word, and must remain dead until doomsday.—N. Y. Herald.

DEEP-DIVING PEARL FISHERS.

Over One Hundred Feet Frequently Reached by Malays in Their Plunges.

The custom of Malay pearl-fishers is to anchor the ship on the oyster-beds, or as near to them as possible. The diving takes place twice daily, at morning and evening. In "Studies in Brown Humanity" Hugh Clifford gives this description of the diving:

All the boats are manned at morning and evening, and the Sulu boys row them out to the point selected for the day's operations. The white man in charge always goes with them in order to keep an eye upon the shells, to resuscitate exhausted divers, and generally to look after his own interests.

Presently a man lowers himself slowly over the side, takes a long, deep breath, and then, turning his head downward, swims into the depths, his limbs showing dimly in froglike motions until, if the water be very deep, he is completely lost to sight.

In a few minutes he comes into view again, his face straining upward, yearning with extended neck for the air that he now needs so sorely. His hands cleave the water in strong downward strokes; his form grows momentarily more distinct, until the fixed, tense expression of his staring face is plainly visible. Then the quiet surface of the sea splashes in a thousand drops of sunsteeped light as his head tears through it, and his bursting lungs, expelling the imprisoned air, draw in the breath which they crave in long, hard gasps. If the dive has been a deep one a little blood may be seen to trickle from nose and mouth and ears. At times even the eye-sockets ooze blood, the result of the fearful pressure to which the diver has been subjected.

He brings with him from the depths of the sea two oyster shells, never more and very rarely less; and when these have been secured he is helped back into the boat, from which another diver is now lowering himself.

These men on occasion dive to the depth of 20 fathoms—120 feet—and although the strain kills them early, they are a cheery, hopeful set of men till such time as their lungs and hearts give way.

The shells are the property of the white man, for the divers dive for a wage, and it is the mother-of-pearl to which the European looks for his sure profit. The pearls themselves form the "plums" which may or may not fall to his lot.

It is a fascinating employement to open the shells when each closed bivalve may contain within it a treasure on the proceeds of which a man may live in comfort for the best half of a year.

King Who Never Smiled Again.

"One of the questions asked at a recent teachers' examination," says a college professor, "was, 'Can you name the monarch referred to in English history as the king who never smiled again?'

"The reply of one of the fair candidates for license to teach was, 'King William Rufus after he was shot in the forest.'

"History records that the shot was fatal."—Albany Argus.